

Holidays in your hometown

Pull out and keep this section for information and ideas on how to enjoy the holiday season in Santa Clara.

Annual Holiday Tree Lighting



Feel the spirit of an old fashioned small town Christmas! The City of Santa Clara will celebrate its annual "Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony" on Friday, Dec. 2 at 6 p.m. with a special celebration – the 100th birthday of Teddy, the stuffed bear that sits on top of the tree every year. Children are encouraged to bring their own teddy bears, have cocoa and take photographs with Teddy.

Members of the Hillis family that originally donated Teddy to the City's holiday festivities will be present for this milestone event.

This year's celebration will also include live music, twinkling lights and festive decor, complete with cookies for the kids and hot coffee for the grown ups. Hot dogs, chips and drinks will be on sale to enjoy while awaiting the arrival of Santa Claus. Bring your camera to take your child's photo sitting on Santa's lap!

The event is open to the public, and will take place at the corner of Civic Center Drive and Lincoln Avenue in Santa Clara. Donations of canned food for Second Harvest Food Bank, and donations of new teddy bears for those in need, are appreciated. Call 615-3170 for further information.



It's Teddy's 100th birthday



Employees from the Electric Utility, Silicon Valley Power, like Electric Meter Technician Phil Waterhouse (pictured above), help to keep this holiday tradition.

It's Happy Birthday time for Teddy, the beloved stuffed bear that has perched atop of Santa Clara's holiday tree since 1911. Yes, that makes him 100 years old!

Teddy was once the beloved toy of Alice Dixon Hillis whose father was the utilities superintendent for the City. When Alice was just one year old, Mr. Dixon "borrowed" her bear to serve as an ornament on top of the tree he had just cut down in the Santa Cruz Mountains for City Hall. Teddy has

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December Events

Sculpture Exhibition

October 22 through March 2012

Taking time off during the holidays and looking for interesting things to do? The City of Santa Clara's Biennial Indoor Sculpture Exhibition has dozens of pieces of art on display at City Hall, 1500 Warburton Avenue from October 22 through March 2012. A jury consisting of commissioners from the Cultural Advisory Commission selected the sculptures, which are made from recycled or reused materials that range from beautiful to evocative. The public is encouraged to tour this free exhibition, Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. For more information, call 615-2210.



Historic Holiday Home Tour

Friday, Dec. 2 and Saturday, Dec. 3



Tickets for the 33rd annual Santa Clara Historic Home Tour will go on sale beginning in October. This year's tour will be held Friday, Dec. 2, 6-10 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 3, 12 noon-5 p.m.

One of the private homes featured this year is the Oscar Eberhard House, a 1912 Period Revival Craftsman. Other architectural styles will also be represented. The public building on the tour will be the Italianate-style Harris-Lass House (pictured above) that is celebrating its 20th anniversary as a public museum. The Museum's interior rooms will be festively decorated.

The Board of the Harris-Lass House Museum co-sponsors the tour with the Old Quad Residents Association. Proceeds benefit historic

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Global Winter Wonderland



Don't miss this five-acre illuminated Global Village, in Santa Clara November 25 through January 2. See page D for more information.



December Events (Continued from previous page)

Home Tour (continued from page A)

preservation projects and other non-profit groups in Santa Clara. The non-profit Santa Clara Arts & Historical Consortium also holds an opportunity drawing at one of the houses during the tour as a fundraiser.

Home tour tickets are \$20 if ordered by mail or on the tour's website by Oct. 31. Mail order forms will be available during October at the Central Park and Mission Libraries. Tickets also may be ordered by sending a legal-size self addressed stamped envelope to: Historic Home Tour 2011, c/o Harris-Lass House Museum, P.O. Box 3311, Santa Clara, CA 95055-3311.

Beginning Nov. 1, ticket prices are \$25 general admission, \$20 seniors (60+) or children (6-12) and may be purchased at City Lights Espresso, 1171 Homestead Rd. No children under the age of 6 will be admitted. If still available the days of the tour, all tickets will be \$30 at the door of the Harris-Lass House, 1889 Market St.

For more information, call the Harris-Lass House Museum message line at 249-7905, view the Home Tour website at sc-hometour.com or email hometour@harrislass.org.

The Christmas Mouse

Dec. 2-11

The Santa Clara Players will perform an original play by Michael Antonucci based on the music of Linda Arnold, for children ages 4 and up. Performances are 7 p.m. on Dec. 2 and 9, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Dec. 3 and 10, and 3 p.m. on Dec. 4 and 11 at the intimate Hall Pavilion behind the Triton Museum of Art, 1505 Warburton Ave. Tickets are \$10.

This is the tale of Mrs. Robinson who is determined to win the Gingerbread House contest this year. But a Christmas mouse, who lives with the Robinsons, needs food for his family and finds her creation. Unfortunately, the mouse has no self control and destroys the entire gingerbread house, which renders him quite ill. Eventually, with some outside help, things get better and the mouse learns quite a lot about life and getting along with the big people.

For ticket information visit scplayers.org or call 248-7993.



Breakfast with Santa

Saturday, Dec. 3

Santa is making a special visit to Santa Clara this year to have breakfast with children who sign up with at least one adult per family. A tasty breakfast of pancakes, sausage, milk, juice and coffee will be prepared by the Santa Clara High School Booster Club and children can have their photo taken with Santa and create unique holiday crafts. The event starts at 9 a.m. at the Santa Clara Senior Center. Space is limited, so early registration is recommended. Look for information in the Fall Recreation Activities Guide or call 614-3140. Cost is \$14 for residents of Santa Clara and \$18 for non-residents.

Comfort and Joy Concert

Friday, Dec. 9 and Sunday, Dec. 11

In its highly popular holiday tradition of "Comfort and Joy", the Santa Clara Chorale this year features music for choir and brass. Performance

will include John Rutter's "Gloria," Sir Hubert Parry's anthem "I Was Glad," and Michael Praetorius' "In Dulci Jubilo." Traditional carols will also be performed. The concerts begin at 8 p.m. on Friday and 4 p.m. on Sunday, both in Mission Santa Clara. For information and tickets visit scc.org.

Holiday Craft Faire

Dec. 10

The first annual Holiday Craft Faire will be held in the Redwood Room of Central Park Library on Saturday, Dec. 10 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. All are invited to attend for a bit of holiday spirit and shopping. Vendor cost is \$25 per table and applications are available at the Santa Clara City Library Foundation and Friends office on the second floor of the Library, 2635 Homestead Road. Items should be primarily handmade; no food sales will be allowed. Spaces are limited and will be juried. Proceeds benefit Library programs. For information, call 615-2988.

The Nutcracker Ballet

Auditions on Sunday, Sept. 11

Performances on Saturday, Dec. 10 and Sunday, Dec. 11



A full-length ballet production of "The Nutcracker" will be presented by the Santa Clara Ballet. All performances will be at the Santa Clara Convention Center, 5001 Great America Parkway. Curtain time for this annual full-length performance is 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Saturday and 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. on Sunday.

The company engages professional guest artists in lead roles, while providing opportunities for semi-pre-professional dancers, children and adults to perform in a professional environment. Open auditions for dances of all levels and ages will be held on Sunday, Sept. 11. For information, call 865-9780 or visit santaclaraballet.org.

Holiday-themed operas

Saturday, Dec. 18 and Sunday, Dec. 19

Mission City Opera will present "Truce of Carols" by Michael Taylor, followed by "Amahl and the Night Visitors," a one act opera by Gian Carlo Menotti that has become a holiday tradition. Performances are at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. at the Mission City Center for Performing Arts, 3250 Monroe St. Tickets are priced from \$15 to \$45 and may be purchased online at missioncityopera.org or call 749-7607 for information.

Unusual holiday gift ideas

For unique gift ideas that showcase your pride in Santa Clara, visit the City Store at the Chamber of Commerce, 1850 Warburton Ave. Gift items include sweatshirts, mugs, polo shirts, golf accessories, canvas tote bags, umbrellas, license plate frames, and more.



The Santa Clara Arts & Historical Consortium can provide prints from the photographs in its historic photo collection, which includes the City of Santa Clara's historic photographs. An 8 by 10 inch photograph costs only \$20. For larger sizes, request quotes. Copies of about 150 of these photographs are hanging in the corridors of City Hall, in Save Mart supermarket at 2610 El Camino Real, and in Kaiser Hospital. The complete collection can be viewed and orders placed on most Sundays from 1 to 4 p.m., at the Headen-Inman House, 1509 Warburton Ave.

Show you care about the environment, as well as the individual, by giving Energy Star power-efficient electronics such as audio and video equipment, speakers, TVs, cordless phones, computer equipment and compact fluorescent light bulbs. More gift ideas can be found at siliconvalleypower.com/plugins, and you can learn more about power savings at EnergyStar.gov.

Recycle your holiday tree

The holiday season's final tradition is putting the tree out for curbside recycling. This year, trees will be picked up on your regular solid waste collection day during the week of January 9-13. Here's what to do:

- * Remove all ornaments, tinsel, nails, and the stand. Flocked trees cannot be recycled, so they will be collected and disposed of as garbage.
- * Place the stripped tree next to the garbage and Clean Green cart setouts at the curb on your regular collection day.
- * Holiday trees from small businesses and residents who miss the curbside collection may be dropped off at the southwest corner of the intersection of San Tomas Expressway and Monroe Streets. The drop-off will be available during the week of January 9-13 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. only.
- * Multi-family residents can set out their holiday trees on the nearest public street for pickup on the assigned single family home



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garbage/recycling collection days. Call 615-2063 to find out assigned garbage/recycling days in particular areas.

- * Trees may also be recycled after Jan. 13 by cutting up the tree and placing the pieces in the Clean Green cart.

For more information on holiday tree recycling, call 615-2063.

Reduce and recycle holiday waste

Dreaming of a “Green Christmas?” Here are some eco-friendly holiday ideas:

- Wrap gifts in comics, old maps or other colorful paper materials normally found around the home or office.
- Instead of wrapping gifts in paper, try presenting them in reusable containers like tin or plastic holiday boxes, gift bags or baskets. Save gift bags, boxes and bows for reuse.
- Buy gift wrap that contains recycled paper. Avoid metallic-type wrapping papers that contain foil, Mylar or holographic materials, which are not recyclable.
- Recycle wrapping paper (except metallic, foil, Mylar or holographic) with mixed paper in the City’s new single-stream curbside recycling program. Simply place in the blue recycle cart.
- Make gift tags or ornaments from old greeting cards and wrapping materials
- Use cloth napkins, metal flatware, china plates and real glasses for “waste-less” holiday parties and meals.
- Purchase a manufactured tree that can be stored and reused each year.

Excess holiday waste a problem?

Holidays bring friends, families, parties and get-togethers – and sometimes more trash than your garbage cart can handle. Santa Clara residents may set out as many as four additional 30-gallon plastic garbage bags (limit two bags per week) on their regular solid waste collection day from Dec. 26 through Jan. 6 at no extra charge.

At any other time during the year, for a nominal cost, additional 30-gallon plastic bags of garbage tied with “extra bag” tags may be placed at the curb for pickup on your regular solid waste collection day.

Extra bag tags can be purchased for \$4.00 each at the Cashier’s Counter in the Finance Department at City Hall, 1500 Warburton Ave., between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Tags may be ordered by mail also. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a check (payable to “City of Santa Clara”) to the Utility Services Division, Finance Department, 1500 Warburton Ave., Santa Clara, CA 95050. Indicate the number of tags to be purchased and make the check payable for the exact amount of \$4.00 per tag.

Residential customers with front-load dumpsters are eligible to get one additional collection per year free of charge. Just call Mission Trail Waste Systems at 727-5365 to make an appointment for the extra collection. For more information, call 615-2063.

Holiday Outdoor Decorations Contest



Nominations for the annual Holiday Outdoor Decorations Contest will be accepted from Nov. 28 through Dec. 7. Decorate the exterior of your home in cheerful, colorful holiday décor and talk to your neighbors about doing the same. Nominate yourself, your neighbor, or one of the brightly lit homes you’ve seen around the City.

Nominations can be made for best outdoor decorations in four categories: residential, business, neighborhood, and best tree. A team of judges will evaluate nominees on or after Thursday, Dec. 8. Winners will be announced the week of Dec. 12. Check the City’s website at santaclaraca.gov for the list of winners along with the full list of entrants on a convenient map. Winners will be acknowledged at a City Council meeting in early January 2012.

For more information, contact the City Manager’s Office at 615-2210.

PREVENT HOLIDAY TREE FIRES



Christmas trees, both real and artificial, are the items first ignited in an estimated average of 240 reported U.S. structure fires per year. These fires caused an average of 25 civilian deaths and \$13.1 million in direct property damage per year. Christmas tree fires are not common, but when they occur, they are likely to be serious. On average, one of every 15 reported fires that began with a Christmas tree resulted in death.

According to the United States Fire Administration and your Santa Clara Fire Department, there are simple, life-saving steps you can take to greatly reduce your chances of becoming a holiday fire casualty.

Selecting a tree

- Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needles should not break if the tree has been freshly cut..
- The trunk should be sticky to the touch.
- Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut too long, has probably dried out, and is a fire hazard.

Caring for your tree

- Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks.
- Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks.
- Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.

Disposing of your tree:

- Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood-burning stove.
- When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly.
- The best way to dispose of your tree is to take advantage of the City’s tree recycling program.

More holiday fire safety tips

- Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up.
- Use only holiday lighting that has been listed by an approved testing laboratory such as Underwriters Laboratory (UL).
- Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe.
- Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet.
- Make sure to periodically check the wires — they should not be warm to the touch.
- Do not leave holiday lights on unattended.
- Candles can be dangerous. If you do use them, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down.
- Never leave candles burning unattended.
- Never put lit candles on a tree
- Do not go near a holiday tree with an open flame — candles, lighters or matches.



Holiday crime prevention tips



Unfortunately, the holidays present many opportunities for burglars, muggers and pickpockets. The following tips for a safer holiday season are provided by your Santa Clara Police Department. Practice these tips all year long!

Shopping Safety

- Lock packages in the trunk.
- Don't overload yourself with packages.
- If you must shop in the evening, shop with a friend.
- Park in well-lighted areas, as close as possible to store entrances. Be particularly aware of persons in the parking lot, especially near your car.
- Lock your car and make sure the windows are closed.
- Carry only the charge cards you will need. Don't carry or flash large sums of cash.
- Carry your purse next to your body with the purse flap against you. Men should carry their wallets in front or inside pockets.
- Be aware of your surroundings and the people around you. Don't allow your attention to become distracted from your purse or packages.
- Teach children to go to a store clerk or security guard and ask for help if you become separated in a store or shopping mall.
- Don't hesitate to notify store security if you see suspicious activity.
- If you have to wait for a ride, wait in a busy, well-lighted place.
- If you are a victim of a crime, report it to police immediately.

Home Safety

- Be extra cautious about locking doors and windows when you leave the house, even if you will only be gone for a minute.
- Don't put large displays of holiday gifts in view of your windows or doors.
- When going on trips or out for evenings, use automatic timers to turn indoor lights on and off to make it appear you are home.
- Immediately after the holidays, mark new gifts with your California Driver's License or ID number. Engravers are available at the Central Park Library for check out.
- Don't advertise what gifts you received by putting the boxes curbside on trash day. Break the boxes down before placing curbside, or take them to a recycling center.

Traveling

- Use automatic timers for lights in your home.
- Stop mail and newspaper delivery.
- Ask neighbors to look after your home.
- Don't tell the world that your home will be empty by posting vacation plans on Facebook, Twitter or other social networking websites.

Teddy

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spent December on the Santa Clara tree every since. (Pictured at left circa 1962.)

Over the years, Teddy the bear got a little bare. Employees of the Electric Utility Department tried a mini-face lift with duct tape and silver spray paint, but Teddy continued to show his age. In 1987, Teddy underwent more drastic surgery in the hands of Evelyn Carmichael, the wife of then Parks & Recreation Director Earl Carmichael. She refurbished Teddy with a furry tan cloth that closely resembles the way toy bears looked in 1911. The

daughter of another City employee at the time donated a raincoat and boots to help Teddy stay dry during winter storms.

Life was pretty good for Teddy until the winter storms of 1998 when City crews were so busy keeping power on for local homes and businesses that Teddy had an extended stay in the tree. Birds destroyed the yellow rain gear to get to Teddy's fur for their nests. Again, Evelyn Carmichael came to the rescue and gave Teddy a makeover that brought him back to his original charming look. But underneath, Teddy is the same 100-year-old bear.

The City stopped cutting down trees for the holiday display in 1970, so Teddy's December home has been the same 70-foot Colorado blue spruce for more than three decades. Surrounded by 1,000 colored lights, Teddy is at home and accepting birthday wishes from visitors after the tree lighting ceremony on Dec. 2.



Torn raincoat on Teddy after a storm.



Former Electric Utility employee, Jerome Retterath, with duct-taped Teddy.

2011 Annual Report/2012 City Calendar coming your way

During the month of December, Santa Clara's 2011 Annual Report/2012 City Calendar will be distributed to all residents by mail. If you do not receive one by January 1, additional copies will be available at City Hall and the Library.

The issue will focus on both significant accomplishments of the past year and the City Council's 2011-13 Principles and Priorities. A suggestion card on the back of the calendar allows residents and businesses a convenient opportunity to submit ideas on improving City services, or to forward a compliment about a particular municipal program for the response of City staff.

Global Winter Wonderland coming to Santa Clara – November 25



An enchanting five-acre Global Village featuring more than 40 illuminated structures will open in the Great America Parking Lot, on Nov. 25 and continue through the holidays until Jan. 2. Dozens of structures, some 40 feet high, will replicate some of the world's most iconic landmarks, holiday themes and traditions. The village will also include holiday food, arts and crafts, dance and music performances from around the world. "Global Winter Wonderland" is produced by the International Culture Exchange Group, an international event organizer working to promote cultural exchange between countries. For hours and days of operation, tickets and other information, visit globalwonderland.org.